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AN EXAMINATION OF THE ETHICAL TEACHINGS OF JESUS AND PAUL AS RELATED TO THE SUMMUM BONUM

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE ETHICAL TEACHINGS OF JESUS AND PAUL AS RELATED TO THE SUMMUM BONUM

INTRODUCTION

When Aristotle spoke of the Highest Good he meant that, in life, there is for everyone a single supreme attainment which, if missed, will render life a failure, but if gained, will make life a success. For example: the good sought by the use of medicine is health, the good sought by the use of military tactics is victory, and the good sought in architecture is a house. The desired end in all conscious choices is regarded by the chooser as the good.[1]

There are, however, many apparent ends in life, some of which we occasionally choose as means, such as wealth, or musical instruments. It is evident that all such ends cannot be final, but must themselves be means to a final end, which end is the Highest Good, or summum bonum.[2]

Jesus also taught that there is a Highest Good in life, the possession of which is supremely desirable. This aspect of his teaching is presented in such parables as "The

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[1] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, p. 1f.

[2] Ibid.

Pearl of Great Price", and "The Hidden Treasure".[1]

Paul painted the moral degredation of the gentiles of his day in dark colors. We have sufficient evidence to-day to prove that the reality was just as dark as his picture of it. Paul, however, did not lose hope, but appealed to reason and conscience. He believed that the gentiles had the law written in their hearts, and goes so far as to say that some in darkest heathenism know and keep the law. Paul knew that human nature has a tremendous comeback; hence he believed that the individual, in the grip of heathenism at its worst, could become a new creature. Consequently, with that end in view, he held up an ideal before the gentiles in heathendom as life's Highest Good.[2]

The validity of our ethical system is being questioned. In this regard James Truslow Adams writes:[3]

> What the younger generation and their children may be called upon to do may be to make the most rapid, far reaching, and consciously intelligent readjustment of ethical ideals to altered social structure that the race has ever been called upon to make.... They have inherited, perhaps, the biggest mess and the biggest problem that has ever been bequeathed to one generation by another.

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1 Stalker, J., The Ethics of Jesus, p. 24.

2 Alexander, A. B. D., The Ethics of St. Paul, p. 95f.

3 As quoted by D. Drake, The New Morality, pref. vi.

C. E. Jefferson[1] makes the statement that modern civilization has become a tower of Babel. He declares that the air is so filled with theories of social amelioration and industrial reorganization that even the clearest thinkers are, in a sense, bewildered as to where we should look for deliverance.

Consequently we have such studies in the field of religion and ethics as Jesus and the Christian Religion, by F. A. Henry; Paul and Protestantism, by M. Arnold; The Influence of the Apostle Paul on the Development of Christianity, by Otto Pfleiderer, and Christian Origins by the same author; The Fundamentals of Christianity, by H. C. Vedder; Jesus or Christianity, by K. Page; and Paul or Jesus, by A. Meyers.

John Elof Boodin states that early Christianity was a "contagious joy" which made it possible for the Christians to meet all sufferings with triumphant song. Then, says he, came the tragedy of Christianity:[2]

> A Pharisee of Pharisees, with indomitable energy, succeeded in reinterpreting this religion of joy into a religion of sin and expiation. St. Paul fell back upon the primitive tribal idea of guilt, though this had been repudiated by the Hebrew prophets as

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1 Character of Jesus, p. 17.

2 Boodin, John Elof, God, p. 220.

> far back as Jeremiah who declared that only the soul that sinneth shall die, and though Athenian law, four centuries before, had declared that all guilt is personal. For St. Paul the whole race is caught in the guilt of the first sinner. Life is poisoned at the fount and becomes a sin which must be expiated by the innocent -- the death of Jesus being a sacrifice through which others' sins can be atoned. St. Paul and his successors succeeded in nullifying the whole essence of the religion of Jesus. God becomes a despot who demands expiation, instead of the loving father of men.

Dr. George Tolover Tolson writes thus:[1]

> Paul in all probability did not know Jesus at all intimately; and it is not impossible that he never heard or even saw him, at any rate we may be certain that, if he did know him, he did not understand and appreciate him, else he would have followed him.... He seems to have only a very general idea of the life and teachings of Jesus.... The debt that Christianity owes to Paul is so great that one may say without exaggeration that but for some such providential person as was the apostle Paul, humanly speaking, the religion would not have lived at all. He was really the founder of historic Christianity.

In the study of Christian ethics the question naturally arised whether our Christianity of to-day owes its origin to Paul or to Jesus or jointly to both.

The author of this study also became intensely interested in the question, and, in consultation with his advisors, decided to make it a subject of special research under the caption: "An examination of the ethical teachings of

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[1] Tolson, G. T., The Renaissance of Jesus, pp. 40-42.

Jesus and Paul as related to the summum bonum."

For our general treatment and plan of the study, we refer the reader to our outline appearing at the beginning of the study; and for our sources, both original and secondary, we refer the reader to the close of this thesis.

Membership in the Kingdom of God was considered by Jesus to be the Highest Good, for which the individual could, if necessary, well afford to sacrifice everything else.

In Paul's ethical system a Christ-like life was considered to be the Highest Good for both himself and others.

During the process of this study we shall develop these two concepts as presented by Jesus and Paul, namely, the desirability of securing membership in the Kingdom of God, and desirability of developing a Christ-like character. We shall then bring the two concepts together for comparison and evaluation.

CHAPTER I

THE SUMMUM BONUM IN THE ETHICS OF JESUS

In this chapter we shall observe the various conceptions, meanings, and uses of the term Kingdom of God, and how membership therein was attained.

1. The Old Testament Conception of the Kingdom

The Jewish conception of the Kingdom of God appears in the Old Testament. In the Hebrew code of ethics the people were commanded to appear three times each year before Jehovah with gifts. Those gifts corresponded to the tribute which the Hebrews brought to their tribal chieftains, and, after the establishment of the monarchy, to their king. This ancient practice indicated that Jehovah was early regarded as Israel's divide king.[1] The oldest definite statement in which Jehovah is so described is found in the initial version of Isaiah: "I am dwelling among a people with unclean lips, yet mine eyes have seen the King Jehovah of hosts."[2]

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[1] Kent, C. F., The Life and Teaching of Jesus, p. 159.

[2] Isaiah, 6: 5.

The conception also appears in Samuel's protest against the appointment of Saul as king: "Ye said to me, Nay, but a human king shall reign over us, when Jehovah your God is your king."[1]

Dr. Ernest F. Scott[2] quoted the following passages with regard to the Old Testament conception of the Kingdom:

> "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever"(Exodus 15: 18). "Thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kings of the earth" (ii Kings, 19:15). "The Holy One, the creator of Israel, your king" (Isaiah, 43: 15). "As I live saith the King, whose name is the Lord" (Jeremiah, 46: 18). "His kingdom ruleth over all" (Psalm 103: 19). "The Lord sitteth as king forever" (Psalm 29: 10). "They shall speak of the glory of thy Kingdom and talk of thy power, to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts and the glory of the majesty of his kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations" (Psalm 145: 11f.). It was inevitable [continues Scott] that the later thinkers, reflecting on passages like these, which are scattered all through the Old Testament, should concentrate them in one set phrase, "the Kingdom of God."

The Hebrew people also cherished the hope that a human Messiah would come to establish a world-wide kingdom to spread the knowledge of Jehovah throughout the whole earth.

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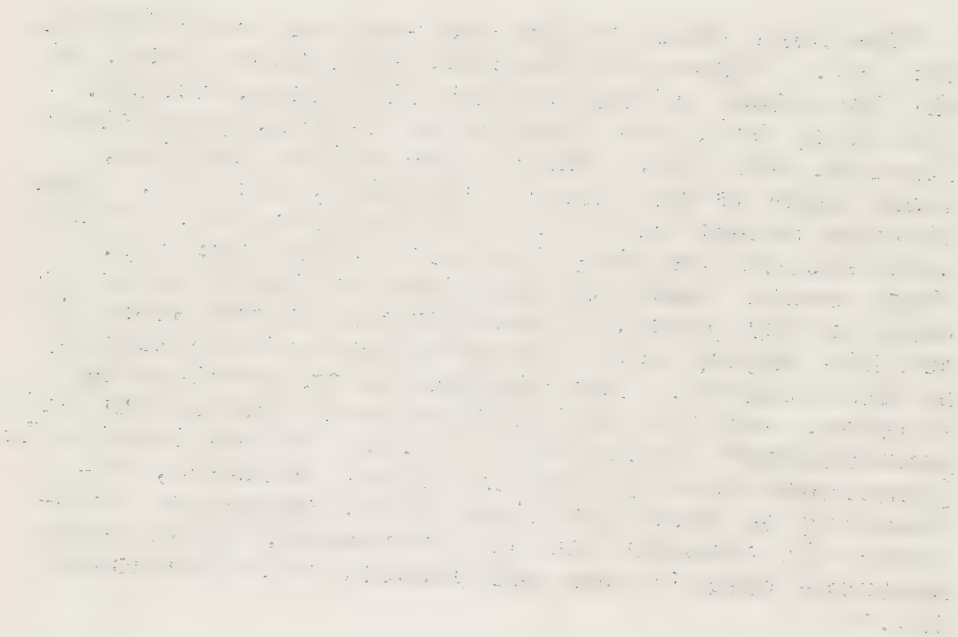
1. 1 Samuel, 12: 12.
2. Scott, E. F., The Kingdom of God, p. 17.



The Pharisees and the educated leaders of Judaism, who realized that the yoke of Rome could not easily be dispensed with, believed that the Kingdom of God would be miraculously established. This expectation is expressed in the book of Daniel in which we read: "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and destroy all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."[1]

A clearer conception of the kingdom is presented in Psalms twenty-four, twenty-nine, forty-seven, and from ninety-five to one hundeed. The human king and Messiah appear and Jehovah alone rules over all nations and races. This conception of the Kingdom is the broadest and the best found in the Old Testament.

2. Jesus' Conception of the Kingdom

Jesus took over the Jewish apocalyptic hope of a new age coming when God would overthrow all usurping powers and assert his rule over the world.[2] By the use of definite

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[1] Daniel, 2: 24.

[2] Scott, E. F., op. cit., p. 111f.

statements and parables Jesus endeavored to make clear what he meant by the term Kingdom. On being asked by the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God would come, he answered and said, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the Kingdom of God is within you."[1] Here we have the plainest possible statement indicating that the Kingdom of God (rule of God) was to have at least its beginnings in the hearts of men. It was at first to appear in the hearts of men, and not as an objective material kingdom with its capital at Jerusalem.[2]

The words translated within you are interpreted in keeping with the prevalent use of the phrase in the Greek translation of the Old Testament. In classical Greek the phrase means in the midst. In all probability it was used by Jesus in both senses. The rule of God is first of all an individual matter; and then it becomes a system of right relations by which men are united in love and good will to each other and to God. Hence the Kingdom of God has its beginnings both in you (ἔντος ὑμῶν ἐστίν) and in the midst of you. If the first condition prevails the second is inevitable.

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1 Luke, 17: 20-21.

2 Kent, op. cit., p. 270.

The individual basis of Jesus' conception of the Kingdom is beautifully illustrated by his teaching regarding children, as recorded in the Gospel of St. Mark:[1]

> And they were bringing unto him little children, that he should touch them: and the disciples rebuked them. And when Jesus saw it he was moved with indignation, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for to such belongeth the Kindgom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein. And he took them in his arms, and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.

Childlike trust is the first essential if a person is to be a loyal subject of his divine King. The attitude of Jesus to the children also suggests the close connection in his mind between the conception of God as King and Father, and between citizenship and sonship. He blended and combined in a wonderful way the ideas of the Fatherhood of God and the family as the present social idea.

Considered in the light of the teachings of Jesus as a whole, the Gospel of Matthew contains excellent social and practical principles. Jesus is reported as having said,[2]

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[1] Mark, 10: 13-16.

[2] Matthew, 6: 28-32.

> And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so slothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Be not therefore enxious saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

The whole teaching of Jesus is then summed up by himself in one comprehensive statement: "But seek ye first his Kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."[1]

Jesus thus took over the Jewish-apocalyptic hope of a time when God would overthorw all usurping powers and assert his rule over the world. The Kingdom also stands for the higher spiritual order which lies behind the visible world and which gives it meaning. It includes all higher reality, and stands more especially for the moral order; and is realized in the inward life of fellowship with God. Again, the Kingdom implies a community of God's people and is thus a social as well as a moral and spiritual ideal.[2]

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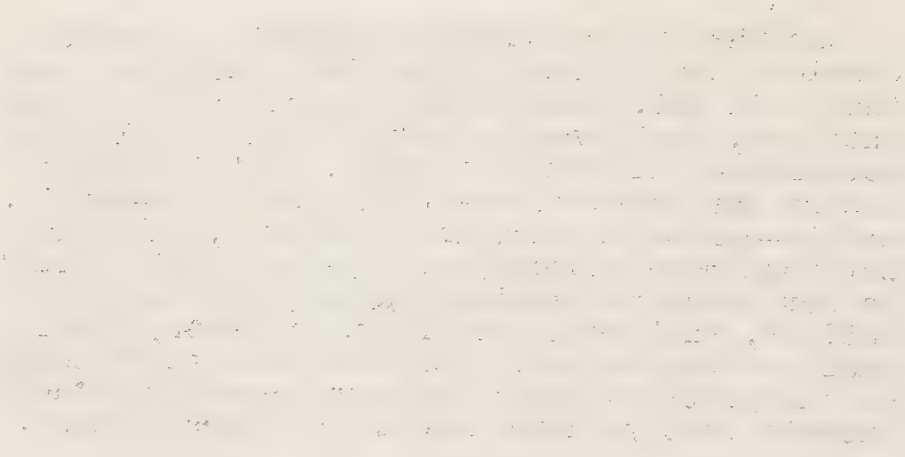
1 Matthew, 6: 33.

2 Scott, E. F., op. cit., pp. 111-113.



3. Jesus' Use of the Term Kingdom

During the early ministry of Jesus, as presented in the first part of the book of Mark, he uses the term Kingdom of God only once. However, after his work had been established in Galilee, the use of the term constantly becomes more frequent, and was used very often in his final addresses during the last week at Jerusalem.[1] The term had a fixed meaning in the minds of the people which Jesus did not accept. Furthermore, it was rather dangerous to use the term because of Roman jealousy. Dr. Kent states that the Aramaic word commonly translated Kingdom, literally means the rule or dominion of God.[2]

Jesus, with the true insight of a great teacher, appreciated the potentiality of a deep-rooted popular phrase. The term Kingdom of God at once caught the attention and fired the enthusiasm of every Jew. The term embodied the loftiest aspirations of his race, and was the goal to which all eagerly looked.

At first Jesus used the term sparingly, but as his Galilean ministry crystallized his convictions, he

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[1] Kent, C. F., The Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus, p. 267.

[2] Ibid., p. 267.

used it more often, and more carefully defined its real meaning to his followers.[1] For him it was the criterion of all values, and a fitting reward on which men should set their hearts. But above all, the Kingdom was for Jesus the fulfillment of the divine purpose, and the chief reason for the existence of the world.[2] "This is the key at once to his ethic, to his theology, to his social teaching, to his inward religion."[3]

4. Parables Representing the Kingdom

In Mark's gospel there are three representative parables which illustrates Jesus' teaching about the righteousness that constitutes readiness for the coming Kingdom. They were uttered after Jesus had been preaching throughout Galilee for a considerable time.[4] The scribes had just published the theory that he was in league with Beelzebub. This charge led Jesus to utter a number of parables in the presence of those who in their own minds had rejected both

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1 Scott, E. F., The Kingdom and the Messiah, p. 9; Kent, C. F., The Life and Teachings of Jesus, pp. 259, 267.

2 Scott, The Kingdom of God, pp. 52-54.

3 Ibid., p. 54.

4 Bosworth, The Life and Teachings of Jesus, p. 187.

Jesus and his message. By their rebellious attitude they had placed themselves in a position where they could no longer understand the real spiritual meanings of his teachings.

In the first parable that we cite as illustrative, his classification of the people was based on the degree and kind of attention that they had given to the truths that he had just presented to them:[1]

> **Hearken: Behold, a sower went forth to sow:** and it came to pass, as he sowed, some seed fell by the way side, and the birds came and destroyed it. And others fell on the rocky ground, where it had not much earth; and straightway it sprang up, because it had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root it withered away. And other fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And others fell into the good ground, and yielded fruit, growing up and increasing; and brought forth, thirtyfold, and sixtyfold, and a hundredfold.

Throughout the parable the importance of hearing and heeding are emphasized. Truth is measured out to each in proportion to the desire for it.

In the second parable under consideration we have illustration of a grain crop steadily proceeding toward harvest without further attention from the grower.

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[1] Mark, 4: 3-8.

In it Jesus expresses his estimate of his work in Galilee:[1]

> And he said, So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. The earth beareht fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come.

The farmer scattered the seed on productive soil and then went his way and the crop steadily and certainly proceeded twoards harvest. Then on a given day the farmer suddenly thrust in his sickle. The harvest had come!

Jesus felt that God was with him, and that he was working with the same irresistible forces that brought crops to harvest. Hence he scattered the seen passing on from town to town, not waiting for the harvest, knowing that in due time it would surely come.

In the third parable we have Jesus' illustration of the mustard seed, which, although the smallest of all seeds, yet, on the rich sulphurous soil about the sea of Galilee, produces a vegetable about the size of a small tree:[2]

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1 Mark, 4: 26-29.

2 Ibid., 30-32.

> And he said, How shall we liken the Kingdom of God, or in what parable shall we set it forth? it is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown upon the earth, though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the earth, yet when it is grown, groweth up, and becometh greater than all the herbs, and putteth out great branches; so that the birds of the heaven can lodge under the shadow thereof.

The point lies in the contrast between the small beginning and the great ending. From the viewpoint of the revolutionary party, Jesus appeared to be talking into thin air. His plans appeared to be wholly inadequate to the creation of a forceful world order. But Jesus knew that what appeared to be so insignificant would lead to the bringing in of the new Realm, whereas violent revolutionary methods would fail.

The parable of the small quantity of yeast mixed with the meal is similar to the parable of the mustard-seed which, in point of delivery, it immediately followed. The parable of the man who sold everything that he had to buy a certain field in which he knew that there was a buried treasure, and also the parable of the pearl merchant who sold his stock of pearls in order to be able to buy one pearl of great price illustrate the wisdom of parting with everything necessary in order to secure a place in the Kingdom.

5. Readiness for the Coming Kingdom

A righteous life is the kind of life that will be lived in the new age, hence all the expectant citizens of the Kingdom must begin to live righteous lives while they wait for its coming.[1] His teaching of righteousness was an expression of his own inner experience, and his conception of the Kingdom took shape in the precincts of his own sould. Since the Kingdom of God meant the Rule of God, it was for God that one must be ready. Therefore an inner experience with God was evidently the dominent feature of his consciousness.

Righteousness was primarily an attitude of the heart in which a man found himself in contact with the unseen energy of the will of God. Hence the primary adjustment necessary to enter the Kingdom of God must be made in the heart. A man is good or bad as he, in his heart is yielded to or is resisting the will of God: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. The good man out of his evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."[2]

Sincerity and honesty are characteristics of a righteous heart. The heart must be sincere and unreserved

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1 Bosworth, op. cit., p. 150.

2 Matthew, 12: 35.

in its love to God and man. The significance of these two commands in expressing Jesus' idea of righteousness becomes evident when we observe what he meant by God and love. The term love as Jesus used it appears to mean a warm active desire on the part of one person directed towards another to see that other person becomes all that his nature indicates that he should be, and a desire to help him in the execution of every worthy purpose to which he sets his will. The unseen energy of God's will in every man's heart was urging him on to lay hold of the righteous way of life. In the words "Thy kingdom com; thy will be done on earth as ti is in heaven" Jesus pictured a race of men whose righteousness would consist in honesty, friendliness, wisdom, and sincerity manifested in each individual, and in all social customs, laws, and institutions. God had set his heart on such a result, hence to love God was to work with him to the utmost in the accomplishment of such a result.[1]

The second command is similar to the first. It is the sense of a loving relationship to God which serves as a motive for the heart attitude of "good will to men." "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that ye may be the sons of your Father in heaven: for he

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[1] Mark, 12: 29-30; Matthew, 22: 36-37; Luke, 10: 27-28.

makes his sun to rise on the just and the unjust."[1] All outer righteousness should spring from love for God. We thus engage in righteous activity with no desire for public applause, but only for God's approval which we feel in the secrecy of our own hearts.[2]

Righteousness is therefore described by Jesus as consisting of the possession of a sincerely loving heart. The standard is that a man's love for his neighbor be as strong and as reliable as his love for himself: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Loving one's neighbor as one's self does not mean that we must ignore our own interests in the desire to safeguard similar interests in the lives of others. If we allow others to sacrifice their interests in order to enhance ours, we lose our self-respect. We are to meet the needs of others on the level with our own, a sort of pooling of interests; a true brotherhood in which each member is as solicitous for the welfare of others as he is for his own. In the teachings of Jesus the Kingdom was always in view. We should work together in reciprocal good will for the common good.[3]

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1 Matthew, 5: 44-45.

2 Ibid., 6: 1-8; 16-18.

3 Bosworth, op. cit., p. 167.

Men should not lord it over others. The great are to be the servants of all.[1] The exalter of self shall be humbled, and the man who humbles himself shall be exalted.[2] Such results are achieved by no arbitrary act of God, but as a natural consequence of their self-exalting or self-debasing disposition. The man who "does his righteousness before men to be seen of them" is guilty of ignoring God's claim of first place in his motives, and of wishing certain of his fellows to appear inferior in spirituality. Such an attitude is self destructive.

The persons described in the beatitudes who are to inherit the earth in the new age are described as being meek and lowly in heart, merciful, quick to relieve need, not holding a grudge, forgiving; they are real peacemakers and endeavor to bring about a situation in which good men work together in good-will for the common good. They possess those salt-like qualities which preserve civilization from decay. They are the light of the world and tend to keep others bound together in friendly relations that make community life of the highest possible order, and thus create an atmosphere in which the work of the world can be done successfully. By virtue of what they are, they illuminate the dark spots of earth. In their presence sorrow

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1 Mark, 10: 33-34.

2 Matthew, 23: 12

seems less apprehensive, burdens roll away or become lighter, and the various solicitations to evil lose something of their power. Such are those who are ready for the coming Kingdom.

6. The Person of Jesus in Relation to the Kingdom

Readiness for the coming Kingdom also requires loyalty to the person of Jesus as the Messiah.[1] Scott writes:[2]

> He [Jesus] believed that as God had chosen Moses and David so he had chosen him for a far greater task. Through him the Kingdom of God was to become a reality. This, in its essence, was his conviction, and under those forms of thought with which he worked it could only express itself in one way. According to the apocalyptic hope God was to fulfill his purposes through the Messiah, and Jesus had to identify himself with this mysterious figure. As contrasted with those who had only foretold the k Kingdom he was to be the instrument of its coming, and therefore he was the Messiah.

Jesus was first of all the prophet of the Kingdom and then its Messiah. Says Dr. Scott: "When he declared himself Messiah he must have thought of his work in its moral

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1 Bosworth, op. cit., p. 183.

2 Scott, The Kingdom of God, pp. 125-126.

significance. Through him the great spiritual changes would be effected. The will of God would come at last to its fulfillment, in the world and in the hearts of men."[1] His personality became identified with his message. After he had been declared by the scribes to be in league with Beelzebub, it became natural for all who really believed his message to champion his person as Messiah, and to emphatically assert their devotion to him as leader. The lines were then sharply drawn between those who were for or against him; and loyalty would then naturally be regarded as a requisite for citizenship in the coming Kingdom.

Loyalty to Jesus might divide a family! Anyone who would desert him, because of family opposition, was unworthy of such a leader and of such a goal. The interests at stake were so vital that one might well <u>hate</u> the various members of his family who, in their opposition to Jesus, were dragging one down to ruin in the rapidly approaching judgment-day.[2] The most merciful way of arousing the opposing members of a family to a sense of their peril would be to abruptly break with them and hurry away and join the little group about the person of Jesus.[3]

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1 Scott, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 127.

2 <u>Matthew</u>, 10: 34-37; <u>Luke</u>, 14: 26.

3 <u>Matthew</u>, 8: 21-22; <u>Luke</u>, 9: 59-60.

CHAPTER II

THE SUMMUM BONUM IN THE ETHICS OF JESUS [continued]

1. What Messianism Meant to Jesus

If there were a Messiah at all he would necessarily have to operate on a world scale. The Kingdom of God, in whatever form it was held, meant the eventual Rule of God over all the world through Jesus the Christ.[1]

Jesus felt from experience that he was doing the will of God. In this respect there was perfect agreement, and this sense of agreement begot in him a spirit of gratitude and meekness. At the same time it lifted him far above the scribes and Pharisees. He could say;[2]

> All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him.

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1 Bosworth, op. cit., pp. 300-301.

2 Matthew, 11: 27.

Jesus had unusual reaches of personality that made it possible for him to sense the will of God and to make inner adjustments in his life which resulted in a unique character. He therefore felt that he should assume the leadership for which his unique and positive experience with God had fitted him. He could not do less without failing in further moral development. The essential nature of the will of God in his life was its urge upon him to share with God. This sense of being thrust forward by the will of God into the responsibilities of supreme leadership drove Jesus to assume the Messianic title. He had a profound interest in all men and a sublime confidence in their capacity to follow their leader in the will of God. He felt that they were capable of following, if they so desired, in whatever path he was capable of leading. "For whosoever shall do the will of God, this is my brother, and my sister, and my mother."[1]

Jesus explored the will of God successfully, and adjusted himself perfectly to what he discovered; and consequently became a perfect revealer of the will of God to man. Hence he could positively express his consciousness authority as the representative of God: "All things

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1 Mark, 3: 35.

have been delivered unto me of my Father." He placed the standard of righteousness before the people that he found in his exploration of the will of God.

2. The Relation of the Messiah to the Kingdom

Jesus did not play the part of an Old Testament prophet. He was a prophet in so far as he shared the prophets' consciousness of a divine calling, but he refused to bend to traditions. By a right which he neither questioned nor explained he took his place as master and placed his own beliefs in opposition to the traditions of the past. This consciousness of a special prerogative which he felt that he possessed was at first something apart from the doctrine of the Kingdom, but later, the consciousness of unusual power residing in himself and his idea of the Kingdom were blended.[1] He felt that the power which would necessarily be apparent during the Kingdom Age had already begun to operate through him. He was not only conscious of a power to work miracles but also to forgive sins. These two powers he appeared to regard as rather closely allied.

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[1] Scott, The Kingdom of God and the Messiah, p. 150.

His summons to men to enter the Kingdom took on the form of a personal invitation: "Follow me." Ever and again he declared that the personal and collective attitude of men toward him would ultimately determine their attitude to, and relation in the Kingdom of God.

Jesus felt, by a deeper and more profound relation to God than any other man had ever enjoyed, an immediate instinct which would admit of no other analysis than that God was his Father in a sense in which he could not be said to be the Father of others.

> This belief had grown up in Him, above all, through His consciousness of a new and profound relation to God. He felt, by an immediate instinct which could admit of no analysis, that God was His Father, in a sense that could not be predicated of any other man. Here we arrive at the ultimate and inexplicable element in the life of Jesus. The evidence of it can be traced, with more or less clearness, through all his recorded teaching.[1]

This contact with God is definitely expressed in the following words:[2]

> At that season Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise

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[1] Scott, op. cit., p. 153.

[2] Matthew, 11: 25-27; Luke, 10: 21-22.

> and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes [childlike-minded]; yes, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father.

At Caesarea Philippi Jesus made a positive affirmation regarding his Messiahship. He was not certain in what way his disciples regarded him in relation to the Kingdom, so he approached the subject tentatively, to see if his immediate followers had guessed his secret. Hence he asked his disciples the question:[1]

> Who do men say that I am? And they told him, saying, John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but others, One of the prophets. And he asked them, But who say ye that I am? Peter answered and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.

Judging from the positive reply that he received from his followers, through their spokesman, Peter, it would appear that his Messianic identity had been fully settled in their minds for some time. However, the fact of his Messiahship was only half the truth that he wished to communicate. Their declaration of his Messiahship opened up the way for him to disclose to them that his real purpose would be accomplished through suffering. Hence he made a twofold declaration by affirming Peter's

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[1] Mark, 8: 29.

admission on the one hand, and on the other, in the pursuance of his Messianic calling he would suffer many things, and finally be handed over to death. The two truths were clearly expressed at the same time, and had evidently grown up in his mind at the same time.[1]

3. The Place of the Kingdom in the Teaching of Jesus

Jesus gave the Kingdom of God idea great prominence because it was uppermost in the minds of the various classes with which he came in contact. It had been the watchword in the preaching of John the Baptist, and was constantly on the lips of the scribes. His followers also frequently raised questions regarding it. The Kingdom of God idea, therefore, furnished a natural and an effective point of contact with his hearers.

Various scholars have attempted to define the concept, Kingdom of God, but Jesus never did. Its real meaning is, the Rule of God, not merely in nature and human history, but also in the hearts and minds of men. It does not refer to the arbitrary rule of a despotic deity, but rather to man's willing acknowledgment of God's

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[1] Scott, op. cit., p. 162.

sovereignty in every thought and act. In its origin it is a spiritual and individual something within the mind of man. In its ultimate development, it is to transform society and make it loyal and devoted to God. In the final realization of the teachings of Jesus regarding the Kingdom of God, it has a large social as wellaas individual significance. His teachings contemplate a universal brotherhood in which all men would be united in a common desire to do the will of God. In the realization of such an order the question of existing society presents itself.

4. The Relation of the Kingdom to Existing Society

Jesus was no idle dreamer. His teachings are the outcome of close and systematic observation. He built on society just as he found it, and never held up unattainable social ideals. Consequently, the greatest social question in the mind of Jesus was how the then present society could be transformed until it measured up to the social ideals of the Kingdom concept. He endeavored to meet this problem frankly, and he illustrated his viewpoint in certain parables drawn from everyday life.

For instance the mustard seed, which, when

grown, becomes a tree of sufficient size for the birds of the air to lodge in its branches; and the seed, which, when cast into the ground, and grew, first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear; or the leaven "which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened" are striking examples.[1]

Jesus recognized the fact of spiritual growth as well as natural growth. He knew that it would take some little time for the spiritual seed to mature and for the spiritual leaven to permeate the whole lump. Hence the full realization of the Kingdom ideals lay beyond the then immediate horizon, but not necessarily some distant future. Therefore the progressive realization of the Kingdom ideals began there and then. The imperfections of society are merely the tares which God in wisdom sees fit to allow. They are but the remnant of a passing world order which is doomed to destruction. The Kingdom principles are now at work in the hearts of men transforming their motives and thereby acting like leaven permeating all society.

Naturally considered we cannot say, "Behold here it is, or There." But he who views the matter

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[1] Matthew, 13: 31-32; Mark, 4: 26-34; Matthew 13: 33.

spiritually can see that the Kingdom of God is already established in the hearts of multitudes of men and women. As spiritual leaven it is even now slowly but certainly transforming society.[1]

5. How the Kingdom of God Would Come

The idea of the sudden and miraculous advent of the Kingdom appears to determine the message of John the Baptist, and Jesus did not appear to depart from the traditional apocalyptic hope. "Jesus believed", says Scott,[2] "that God would interpose in some marvellous way, and change the world order.... All this belonged to the current idea of the Kingdom as set forth in Scripture, and he never thought of questioning it." Jesus recognized that God was already working toward the Kingdom end, but a sudden break, a judgment of the impenitent, a separation of the tares from the wheat seemed necessary. Such a break would have to be sufficiently sudden to mark the end of one age and the beginning of another. It would have to be as apocalyptic as the apprehension, trial, condemnation, and imprisonment of a criminal which mark his freedom from

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[1] Scott, op. cit., pp. 278-280.

[2] Scott, The Kingdom of God, p. 63.

his prison interment. Or as apocalyptic as a harvest which separates the wheat from the tares, and which places the wheat in the granery and consigns the tares to destruction.[1]

No matter how slowly the Kingdom principles might operate in the hearts of men and in the sphere of society, yet there would have to come a moment when the Kingdom principles would be sufficiently advanced to be able to successfully oppose all opposing principles. That moment would evidently be the apocalyptic moment!

Professor Scott points out that the word generally used by the recorders of the utterances of Jesus to express the idea of the advent of the Kingdom is ἀναφαίνεσθαι-- a word chosen to fix special attention on the startling nature of the phenomenon. The Kingdom of God will suddenly "shine out" and instantly be revealed. The sudden illumination of the sky from east to west, by the lightening, the separation of two people while at work in the field, and the separation of two people at night while sleeping on the same couch are typical of the sudden appearance of the Kingdom. Jesus thought of it as suddenly breaking in by the intervention of God.[2]

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[1] Scott, The Kingdom of God and the Messiah, pp. 102, 123.

[2] Ibid., p. 103; Scott, The Kingdom of God, pp. 69-75.

CHAPTER III

THE SUMMUM BONUM IN THE ETHICS OF PAUL

Paul was the greatest of all Christian missionaries; hence it is not at all surprising that the stress of his efforts should be directed to the sphere of practical life, and for the development of moral character. The message of Christianity as presented by him relieved the needs and dissatisfactions arising in the hearts of men which the creeds and philosophies of the time could not satisfy.[1]

1. The Nature of Paul's Ethical Ideal.

Paul's ethics were largely the interpretation of his own experience. Even before his conversion to Christianity, his aim was to obey God and to fulfill the law of righteousness as expressed in the Hebrew Scriptures. He despaired of his own personal ability, but he never doubted that the ethical system itself, as contained in the Hebrew Scriptures, was anything else

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[1] Alexander, Ethics of St. Paul, p. 15; Moncrief, History of the Christian Church, pp. 54-55.

but holy, righteous, and good. Life for him meant life in relation to God. God was thus the beginning and the end of existence. After his conversion, however, life had a new content and was richer and fuller. The revelation of the risen Lord which he received on the road to Damascus "as one born out of due time" became the inspiration of his life. God, as stern Lawgiver, was brought near and interpreted in terms of Jesus the Christ. Jesus was for Paul an historic person!

Paul's belief in this respect is enunciated in the following citations: "But in the fulness of time God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law" (Gal. 4:4). "Which he promised afore through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1: 2-3). Further, in giving form to the institution of the "Lord's Supper", he also says, "For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body which is broken for you: do this in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 11: 23-24). He also knew the passion history. In the same Corinthian letter he recounts the appearances of the risen Lord

first to Peter and then to himself.[1]

The Will of God

Man, as Paul regarded him, was made for fellowship with God, and only as he serves God does he realize his full meaning in life. The key-note of the Old Testament in this respect is "Be ye holy for I am holy". Jesus is also cited as having said, "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." Paul does not use that precise language, but the whole tenor of his teaching is in harmony with such an aim.[2]

There are several passages in the writings of Paul in which holiness lies at the very center of his ethical ideal. In first Thessalonians he reminds his converts of his real aim and informs them that his preaching of the Gospel of God points forward towards the realization of their Christian calling: "As ye know how we dealt with each of you, as a father with his own children, exhorting you, and encouraging you, and testifying, to the end that ye should walk worthily of God, who calleth you into his own Kingdom and glory."[3] His exhortation

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1 Porter, F. C., The Mind of Christ in Paul, p. 17.

2 Alexander, op. cit., p. 99; II Cor., 13: 9-11; I Thess., 2:3.

3 Thessalonians, 2: 11-12.

closes with the prayer that "the Lord may make them increase and abound in love towards one another and towards all men, even as we do towards you, to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God our Father and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."[1] The expected Parousia only intensified the need for blameless character. The doctrinal part of the first Thessalonian letter is the basis for his ethical ideal. In it he writes: "We exhort you by the Lord Jesus,... how ye ought to walk and to please God; for this is the will of God even your sanctification."[2]

In his first letter to the Corinthians he said, "Circumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God."[3] In his second letter to the same church he stated that the end and goal of all Christian living was "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Further, in addressing the Galatian church he lays the foundation of the Christian life in justification by faith and bids his followers "stand fast" in their Christian liberty that they may realize their high calling: "For we through the spirit wait for the hope of righteousness."

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1 Thessalonians, 3: 12-13.

2 Ibid., 4: 3.

3 I Corinthians, 7: 19.

In the sixth chapter of his Roman letter, Paul draws the conclusion that those who are justified by grace belong to the kingdom of grace and consequently must live unto holiness. They must yield themselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and their members must be used as instruments of righteousness unto God. In the twelfth chapter of the same letter he gives a wonderful exhortation in favor of practical living, and then urges those to whom he is writing "to present their bodies a living and holy acceptable sacrifice unto God, not conforming their lives to the fashion of this world, but transforming them by the renewal of their moral natures that they may realize the good and perfect will of God." In writing to the church at Philippi, after expressing his gratitude for their spiritual condition, he uttered a prayer on their behalf in which he expressed a desire that their love might a abound more and more in knowledge and in judgment; and that they might be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ, filled with the fruits of righteousness.[1] In addressing himself to the Colossians he uses very similar words and says, "that ye may be filled with all knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual

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[1] Philippians, 1: 9-10.

understanding, that ye may walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God."[1] They were to do whatever they did heartily as unto the Lord, for they were serving the Lord Jesus.

Blameless character, righteous conduct, and a holy life are evidenced by the foregoing references, to be the essential elements in Paul's ideal of goodness. Obedience to God, both under the Law and in the Gospel, is the supreme standard and goal of endeavor in human conduct. Paul evidently foresaw that Christians might think that the old legal requirements of the Law were annulled, hence he sets himself to controvert this idea. He could have said as did Jesus: "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the Kingdom of heaven."[2] There were those who were ignorant of God's righteousness, and who sent about to establish a righteousness of their own. "Christ is the end of the Law of righteousness to everyone that believeth." Righteousness one way or the other must be fulfilled as God's highest ideal for man.

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[1] Colossians, 1: 9-10.

[2] Matthew, 5: 20.

The chief end of man is to do God's will, and by doing the will of God, man will eventually attain to perfection of character. The Christian's end is not, therefore, self-regarding happiness, but God-regarding righteousness. Alexander sums up the situation in the words of the following excerpt:[1]

> Paul strikes this tremendous note, the key-note of the true ethical conception of life for serious men in a serious world, in his great declaration that in the Gospel is revealed the righteousness of God. Right-eousness is more than righteousness. And it is this positive and searching demand and not mere absence of imperfection or sin, which the apostle exhibits as the goal of man. Rightness is God's holiness, and this in its fullness is man's ultimate aim, the harmony of all conflicting elements, the at-one-ment of all contrasts, the complete realization of his divine humanity. So does Paul's Gospel aim at "presenting every man perfect before God."

Christlikeness

In the epistles of Paul we find two sweeping, all embracing cosmis statements concerning Christ. They are these:[2]

> Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and

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[1] Alexander, op. cit., pp. 103-104.

[2] Colossians, 1: 15-20.

> upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell; and through him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.

The second is rather more brief and is as follows: "Yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are a all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him."[1]

The great significance of the term "through", in the clause "through whom are all things," is arresting. The extraordinary character of the assertion is not to be lessened by finding its source in what is said about the Wisdom of God in the book of Proverbs or in the book of Ecclesiasticus. It is not primarily an Hebrew conception, and is not found in Jewish writers until the Stoic Logos was united with the Hebrew Wisdom as we find it in the Wisdom of Solomon;[2] or almost takes

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[1] I Corinthians, 8: 6.

[2] Porter, op. cit., p. 173.

the place of the Old Testament Wisdom as it does in Philo. It is an amazing conception of the office of a man who had lived a man among men and had died upon a cross. Says Porter:[1]

> It opens the way for a most significant development of Christological doctrine in the Church; for this is the first appearance in extant literature of a Christology of the Logos type, cosmic in range, and metaphysical in application, which sets Jesus completely apart from humanity. It is a strange first appearance of a teaching so extraordinary. Because it appears first in his letter it is quite commonly held that Paul is the author of this Greek or Greek-Jewish Christology; that Paul is the one in whose mind was born the tremendous conception of fitting Christianity to be the religion of the Greco-Roman world by identifying Jesus with the Logos of Hellenistic philosophy and religion, and so lifting him out of the narrowness of Judaism and the small span of his ministry in the significant land of Palestine, and making his place the universe and his time eternity. It is an amazing step whoever took it; but it is a step that some early Christians were more likely to take than others. Those whose religion had been the Logos religion of Philo could perhaps have become Christians only if in some way the place of the Logos in their thought of God and his relation to the world and to men could be filled by Christ.

The Greek notice of a transcendent deity separated from the world of matter also necessitated the conception of a revealing power called reason or Logos, by which the Creator and the creature were brought together -- a bond of intercourse between God and man. Later Judaism

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[1] Porter, op. cit., p. 173.

felt the influence of the Greek notion of the absoluteness and transcendence of God. Its theology betrayed the same tendency to rest in some intermediary being,[1] corresponding to the Logos of Greek speculation. This is found in the Old Testament ideas of the creative "Word" of God, and the "Wisdom" of God, and the "Spirit," or "Breath" of the Almighty.[2]

The pre-presence, or immanence of Jesus seems unreasonable. It is rather, the Logos (Christ) who is pre-present and immanent. Here we quote Dr. Buckham:[3]

> How can the same Christ be Plato's light and mine, Simon Peter's Savior and my neighbor's? How can he be eternal and yet have a place in history, cosmic yet human, racial yet a Jew, universal yet an individual? The key to the solution of this mystery, the reconciliation of this antinomy, lies in part in the relation of personality to individuality. Personality is possible without individuality. God is a person but not an individual. Individuality, too, can exist without personality. There is even suggestion of individuality among crystals, but certainly none of personality. In humanity, personality and individuality are always conjoined. We have no person who is not an individual; we know no individual who is not, at least incipiently, a person. Jesus was both person and individual. The

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1 By the use of the term intermediary we have no reference to a mediating being between God and man.

2 Somerville, D., St. Paul's Conception of Christ, p. 195.

3 Buckham, Christ and the Eternal Order, pp. 100-101.

> Logos is instinctively personal but not individual. Individuality is limiting, personality is free. As an individual Jesus was born, lived, and died; that is, he had a temporal existence. The eternal Christ incarnated himself in the individual Jesus. The Word became flesh. This involves kenosis, self-limitation, humiliation, but not degredation.

Thus the incarnation of the Logos in Jesus links him more closely to humanity, and history then becomes his story. According to Paul there never can be another such incarnation. In view of what Jesus accomplished Paul said, "Therefore also God highly exalted him, and gave him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."[1]

Therefore the living person, Jesus the Christ, thus becomes the norm or standard by which the highest good is presented to man. Paul's ideal, as a pattern, is not abstract ant transcendent, but is immanent and personal. The spirit of Christ is implanted in the individual, and the whole life is but the unfolding of the divine seed incarnated in the soul. Christ had, for Paul, the

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[1] Philippians, 2: 9-12.

value of God, and all that he owed to God he owed equally to Christ.

Paul believed that the fullness of manhood had been realized in Jesus the Christ, hence he becomes the pattern of goodness to others. Paul does not, therefore, define goodness but merely holds up Christ as its embodiment or incarnation.

When he wished to present the desired new type of character he merely held up Christ. When he was urging the necessity of the exhibition of patience under suffering and unjust treatment, he held up the life of Jesus as the great example of patience. When he was addressing those who evidently were not showing the spirit of humility, he appeals to the humility and self-denial of Jesus, and bids them imitate him. When urging the necessity of liberality upon the Corinthian Christians he writes: "You know how gracious our Lord Jesus Christ was; rich though he was, he became poor for the sake of you, that by his poverty you might be rich."[1] When the much needed grace of love was lacking in the Ephesian church he said, "Be ye followers of God and walk in love as Christ hath loved us." Jesus

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[1] Ottley, R. L., The Christian Ideas and Ideals, p. 143.

had heeded the inward urge to prayer, the call to patience and endurance, and the demand for moral decision and renunciation. Paul therefore regarded him as the supreme example of holiness, and a pattern of human character.

Christ, however, is far more than pattern. It is not enough to have an ideal at which to aim. One needs personal assistance to reach his goal. Christ is also this needed power! Paul does not merely say, "Be like Christ." A mere mechanical reproduction is not enough! He says, "Have the mind in you which was also in Christ." Imitation does not stop with overt and visible actions, but it strives to go much deeper and to produce the spirit in which the imitated acts are done. The nature of goodness makes a slavish reproduction impossible; every act of a good man is a direct expression of the spirit within. Hence we must have within us the same moral spirit which is in the heart of the one we endeavor to imitate. The new life is, therefore, not a thing of routine and outward conformity, but it is an indwelling spirit. Thus we need inward power, and Christ is declared to be that power.

The spirit of Christ must take form within us and become effective in our lives. This is the moral task of the Christian. "Let the love of Christ constrain you."

Or again: "Christ in you the hope of glory." In these statements the originality of Paul's ethics appear, namely, the creative impulse of personal love, and a vital contact with a divine power of renewal. We live by Christ as well as love Jesus the Christ. Imitation of Jesus the Christ would appear to be impossible were it not for the fact of the enthronement of the Christ within.[1]

Christ is the principle of the new and higher life, and a knowledge of God is bound up with Jesus Christ the personal ideal. When we are thus personally united with, and in Christ, we belong to a higher order. Our citizenship is elsewhere! Paul says, "Being risen with Christ, seek those things which are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God." He further informs us that this is the governing principle of his own life: "For me to live is Christ." "To win Christ." Christ thus becomes all in all, and all that is worthy of human effort is centered in and accomplished through the living Christ.

To attain this personal union with Christ, and to share his spiritual fellowship now, and to have planted within the living seed which will unfold to perfect fullness is for Paul the Christian ideal, and the last of life for which the first was made.[2]

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[1] Alexander, op. cit., p. 109.

[2] DuBose, W. P., The Gospel According to Paul, p. 296.

Human Brotherhood

In Paul's ethics the real Christian is not a desert ascetic, for "no man liveth unto himself". The individual is not perfected by himself alone, for he must find his duties with regard to others. He is therefore made perfect in relation to the brotherhood of the race. The ideas of the sacredness of life and of human brotherhood find repeated expression in the epistles of Paul. The cross of Christ supplied a new standard of values, and the character of Jesus a new ideal for humanity. Alexander says:[1]

> If we compare the teaching of Paul with the teaching of contemporary writers, we ~~fi~~ find ourselves at once confronted with an ~~entir~~ entirely different order of values. It is no longer the man as citizen, ruler or philosopher; no more the noble or slave as such that comes before us; but man as created in the image of God, man as redeemed by the blood of Christ, and therefore, both to himself and to others of transcendent potential worth and dignity. Nor is there any longer a distinction between man and man. God has made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth. He has sent forth his Son to die for all men, that by his word and spirit he is calling all into a common fellowship in which there is neither Greek nor Jew, bond nor free, male nor female. All are one in Christ Jesus.

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1 Alexander, op. cit., pp. 110-111.

Paul often addressed the community (sometimes humanity) as an organic whole. He knew that Christians could fulfill the law fo Christ only as they bore one another's burdens. He therefore organized his converts into churches, which was necessary to permanent religious life. He knew that no converted heathen person could possible fight his was singlehanded through the darkness of idolatry and immorality which surrounded him. Those closely knit communities of Christians acting as a society, gave to each member a sense of strength and comfort which they could not otherwise have had at that time.[1]

In a sense Paul thought of that spiritual communion, the Church, as the body of Christ of which individuals are members. Paul regarded the whole community as the aim of redemption, and the world as tis possible field. The vices and the virtues that he mentions are those of a small circle of direct influence, but they are also the vices and virtues that have to do, for the most part, with every man and woman under all conditions and at all times. His precepts from which his principles are deduced, are often particular, but they are applicable to all men. When Paul discusses a local question, he

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[1] Wernle, P., Beginning of Christianity, I., p. 190.

usually settles it by the application of a universal principle. For example his decision in the local matter of eating meat offered to idols has no particular interest for us now, but the broad kindly principles that Paul brought to bear on the question makes it an object lesson, or standard of brotherly consideration, by which many of our local differences may be settled.[1] Instead of temporary local judgments he settled such matters by the application of universal principles applicable to the whole moral and spiritual world. Paul is the great exponent of personal spiritual liberty, hence national independence has been strongest in those nations most influenced by the Apostle Paul.

2. Characteristics of Paul's Ethical Ideal

Love, and not law, is the divine power in Paul's eithical ideal. In heart-love to God and to the right the renewed man naturally grows and expands like the flower from a bud, or the ripened harvest from the seed that was sown.

The Law was "righteous, holy, and good," but as a Pharisee, Paul found that he could not perform its

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[1] Jackson, The Expositor, XI., p. 149.

requirements. An inward power was needed to renew and to transform. The "thou shalt," and the "thou shalt not," and the desire of the heart must somehow become one. It was from his own Damascus road experience with Christ that Paul discovered the inwardness of the ideal. Thenceforth the spirit of Christ directed and controlled his whole life from within. "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

The Pauline ideal is symmetrical and not one-sided. He does not condemn one sin and ignore others, nor extole one virtue and pass others by. The tenderness, characteristic of womanhood, and the strength and firmness of manhood were united in him. Justice and mercy, meekness and fearless courage, and self-sacrifice and authority were all proportionately combined. Possibly Paul never quite measured up to his ideal in all respects himself, but there was a fine combination of heroic energy, vehemence, and passion on one hand, and a wonderful delicacy of feeling, and appreciative sympathy on the other. It takes a really great man to be gentle, and only a truly forceful man can be pitiful.[1]

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[1] Alexander, op. cit., p. 119.

The Gentler Virtues Emphasized

Contrary to the practice of antiquity, Christianity placed special honor on such virtues as meekness, humility, and forgiveness. "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, and forebearance; kindness, generosity, trustfulness, gentleness, self-control." Christianity does not, however, ignore the more masculine virtues. Justice is in no wise incompatible with love; neither is meekness opposed to courage. There was no urgent need on the part of Paul to emphasize the bolder characteristics, that was amply taken care of by the pagan thinkers of his day. The self-righteous Hebrew, the egotistical Greek, and the haughty and militaristic Roman needed to be reminded of those gentler and more refined aspects of character which their previous training had either ignored or else despised. Paul often used stern military terms of speech as vehicles for his message. Those sterner characteristics were not lacking in him, nor yet in those to whom he was addressing his message. There is a heroism about suffering as well as in doing, and it often costs more to restrain anger that to retaliate. Peace and forgiveness, in their proper places, are no less honorable and praiseworthy than war and contention.[1]

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[1] Howson, I. S., The Character of St. Paul.

Renunciation and Affirmation

Paul expressed his indebtedness to the Greeks as well as to the Hebrews. Greek culture and Jewish restraint have each their place in his attitude to the questions which confronted him. Every gift of God is good if wisely used with due consideration for others. Morality consists in neither celibacy nor abstention from meat and drink. Self-renunciation is merely a means to an end. It has no place in human life as its practice does not contribute to a worthy end. Paul both taught and enjoyed legitimate development and self-expression as a good in life.

The early monastic practices of the Church would have been severely condemned by Paul, and the Buddhistic withdrawing of one's self is entirely opposed by the Apostle. Use! but do not abuse the world! To the Corinthians he wrote: "The world, life, death, things present, things to come -- are all yours, and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." To the Galatians he said, "All things are yours."[1]

The Universality of Paul's Ideal

Man is a member of the family, the Church, and

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[1] As quoted by Alexander, op. cit., p. 122.

the State. He has duties to himself, to his fellows, and to his God. Paul's Ideal touches life at all of those points. Humanity is thus its field and aim! It embraces all the highest ends of life. He also deals with work and pleasure, dress and ornament, eating and drinking, worship and every-day life; the status of women, the relation of husband and wife, parents and children, masters and servants, and ruler and subjects. All of which make a worthy contribution to moral worth. "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." There is no aristocracy of social rank nor of intellect. His appeal is to man as man: "Admonishing every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom that ye may present every man perfect in Christ."[1]

Pagan morality cleaves mankind in two. The Greeks had Greeks and Barbarians, wise and the unwise, masters and slaves. Lightfoot says that "the temper of Stoicism was essentially aristocratic and exclusive, while professing the largest comprehension it was practically the narrowest of all the philosophical casts."[2] And Alexander writes,[3]

> Plato and Aristotle never got beyond the limitations of their time and country. Plato's ideal republic was bounded by the Greek state, while the ethics of Aristotle contemplated

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1 II Colossians, 1: 28.

2 Lightfoot, Epistles to the Philippians, p. 322.

3 Alexander, op. cit., p. 124.

> nothing greater or more exalted than the sphere of this earthly existence. The kingdom of humanity as conceived by Paul was an idea utterly foreign to the habit of mind of the great masters of Greek philosophy. It is true that the later Stoics preached a kind of cosmopolitanism and equality of man, but we have only to compare the negative, colorless sentiments of an Epictetus or a Seneca with the warm, positive precepts of the Pauline epistles to see how far short the Stoic ideal comes of the Christian conception of brotherhood and charity -- the unity of a perfect man in Christ.

The key to all that Paul taught is found in the expression "in Christ." It was his highest hope for every man. Perhaps no bolder nor greater hope has ever been entertained by man.

CHAPTER IV

THE SUMMUM BONUM IN THE ETHICS OF PAUL [continued]

1. Growth in the Spiritual Life

We begin our new life "in Christ" by an act of faith on our part; and then we continue to walk, and grow, and develop in this new life by faith.

No man receives a moral character as a free gift from God by an act of faith -- that is a process. When a man accepts Christ as his ideal, and his desires and actions are then gauged by the principles of Christ, old things (ideals) pass away and all things become new.[1] The spirit of the Ideal then lives and rules within the individual.[2] Paul himself said, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect [referring to the realization of his ideal in character]: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."[3] He further says,

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[1] II Corinthians, 5: 17.

[2] Galatians, 2: 20.

[3] Philippians, 3: 11-15.

"Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." All who were following the perfect Ideal were to be thus minded.

The new man is not at first a perfect man. He must therefore grow and continue to do so. The divine seed planted within can only maintain itself as its energies unfold and expand. The believer is admonished to "grow up unto Christ in all things."[1] The comparison of the Church to the human body growing up to the stature of manhood, is suggestive of organic development within the Church, which implies the growth and development of every individual. Paul describes the members of the Corinthian church as "babes" to whom he must give milk and not strong meat which is appropriate to a more advanced condition of faith.[2] In a second letter to the same church he said, "Although the outer man perish yet the inner man is renewed day by day."[3] Again he says, "We are being changed into the same image from glory to

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1 Ephesians, 4: 15.

2 I Corinthians, 3: 2.

3 II Corinthians, 4: 16.

glory."[1] The use of the present tense implies a constant progress, and the expression "from glory to glory" implies an advance in likeness to the Ideal.

2. Aids to the Spiritual Life

There are both divine and human aids. Divine aid is expressed by disciplinary and providential measures. To Titus Paul wrote: "The grace of God hath appeared teaching [disciplining] us to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world." Relationships and trials are used as means by which a sober, righteous, and godly character is built. The life of trial is merely a part of the divine discipline. It is only as life is a battlefield that it can become a field of victory. "Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Thanks should be given for everything as all things work together for good to them who love God.[2]

Temptation is wholly under the control of God, and it is used by him as a method of disciplining life. It is in no condition necessary to yield to the temptation

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[1] II Corinthians, 3: 18.

[2] Romans, 8: 28.

as there will always be a way of escape.[1] The seventh chapter of the book of Romans lays particular stress upon the phase of temptation and the sense of evil. Progress in the moral life consists in combatting and overcoming temptation.

Suffering was regarded by Jesus as a means of God for the chastening and developing of man. Even the Son of Man suffered many things; and his followers must also expect to suffer: "If any man would come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall save it."[2] Paul also believed that his thorn in the flesh was a means of grace and contributed to the strength and efficiency of his life and ministry. His convictions on the matter are expressed in the following excerpt:[3]

> Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Wherefore I take pleasure in weakness, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak then am I strong. I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the

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1 I Corinthians, 10: 13.

2 Luke, 3: 7-8.

3 Philippians, 3: 7-8.

> knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse that I may win Christ.

The pagan world looked upon a life to toil as the lot of the slave. But the Jews honored labor. Jesus was taught the carpenter's trade, and Paul labored with his own hands. In fact every Jewish boy was taught a trade; and Paul enjoined his converts to live quietly, to attend to their own business, and to do their daily work so that they could in all respects live lives above reproach before their unbelieving neighbors.[1] "If any man will not work neither should he eat."[2]

Human aids are expressed by the Word of God, not necessarily the expressed letter but rather the spirit revealed in it.[3] Faith is also awakened in the hearts of men and women when the Word of God is preached. And believers are commanded to let the Word of God dwell in them and also to herald it forth to others.[4]

Further, the Church was regarded by Paul as an effective instrument for the advancement of the Christian life. Regarding as he does the Church as the body of

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1 Weizsacker, The Apostolic Age, II., p. 366.

2 II Thessalonians, 3: 10.

3 II Corinthians, 3: 6.

4 Colossians, 3: 6; Romans, 10: 5.

Christ (the body of believers), Christ, therefore, becomes the spirit of the Church. For Paul the Church was the home of piety, and the cradle and nursery of all the various Christian graces, and the center of Christian fellowship and service.

Again, there is the Lord's Supper. The Apostle Paul states that this is a decided help to the spiritual life.[1] He appeared to regard the bread as the symbol of the presence of the Spirit of Christ in the Church, and the wine as the emblem of the death of Jesus by which he became the new pascal sacrifice.

The Corinthians were earnestly entreated by Paul to make certain that they were in the faith: "Try your own selves whether ye be in the faith. Prove your own selves." And to the Galatians he wrote: "Let each prove his own work" so that he might know whether or not he was in Christ.

Prayer keeps the heart in a loving attitude, delivers it from fear, and keeps it filled with the Spirit of God: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts.".[2] Prayer is the

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[1] Alexander, op. cit., p. 121f.

[2] Galatians, 4: 6.

spontaneous outgoing of the heart to God, and is thus one of the most direct aids to the spiritual life. In fact it is the characteristic feature of the spiritual life. Nowhere in his writings does Paul stand out so uniquely as when he prays. He usually begins and ends each letter by some kind of a divinely directed prayer. The following is a fair example: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks" which is God's will to man revealed through Jesus Christ."

Sometimes Paul prayed for temporal blessings, but his chief concern was for the development of the believers in Christian faith and love. Touching this matter he wrote: "This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that ye may approve things that are excellent: that ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ: being filled with the very fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God."[1]

3. St. Paul's Ultimate Aim

The ultimate test of Christianity for Paul was its application to life. Life is the touchstone to which every truth must be brought. If it adds to the enrichment

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[1] Philippians, 1: 9-12.

of life it lives, if not it is eventually dropped. Jesus had promised his followers that they would be relatively like him: "To them gave he power to become the Sons of God." Paul recognized the necessity of such power, and realized that the possession of it was the secret of his own life and ministry. Christian manhood is life at the full! Touching this point Alexander says:[1]

> Christ is for Paul the only begotten of such life. He is the grace that is sufficient for a man. His the strength that is perfected in weakness. He it is that transmutes our very frailities and disabilities into invincible instruments of power, so that each may say as Paul said, "When I am weak then am I strong." This is the strange paradox of the new life which the Apostle never wearies reiterating -- that there is imparted to the feeble, the humble-minded, the distrustful, the ordinary people, common men and women, a new gift -- the force of life, of character, of service, and this is St. Paul's distinctive message to our age.

Paul did not merely present a new Ideal to mankind, but he also disclosed a new power in connection with that Ideal which makes the realization of the Ideal possible. When the individual accepts Christ as his Ideal he is given, or rather, becomes possessed with a power which enables him to grow up unto Christ in all

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[1] Ethics of Paul, p. 355.

things. The spiritual life is thus a force; and character is a growth unfolding and expanding from the hidden seed within. This union of Ideal and power to attain to the Ideal is that which differentiates Paul's ethics from every other system of ethics in the world. His motto was: "This one thing I do,... I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Such is the watchword and challenge of Paul's whole ethical appeal.

Man being thus animated by a new life-principle, God can then work in him "both to will and to do." The power of Christ within dominates all the faculties and inspires the individual's activities. He is no longer the old self, but he is a new creature possessed with a higher power, and thus his better self comes into its own: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." The "Christ in me" is the Ideal and power of the new Life.

Paul was also conscious of the mystery of existence. Life was not a simple matter for him, but rather it was a thing of many modes and expressions; light and shadow, happiness and sorrow, disappointment and conquest -- all enter into life.

Life is also a conflict: the flesh against the spirit, the body against the soul, natural impulses against divine principles, and the law of our members against the

law of our minds. It is these opposing principles that give life its moral worth, and its irresistible interest. We carry eternity in our hearts, consequently life may sink to tragedy or rise in triumph! Man was made for God and has a yearning in him for the divine! He is haunted with a sense of dissatisfaction and unrest. In the following excerpt Paul gives expression to the situation:[1]

> As dying and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.... The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not that I do.... O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?.... With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Life, however, is far more than a clashing of discords. It is like an instrument with many strings, and out of dissonance comes more wonderful harmony. Paul is undaunted by apparent mystery, unafraid of evil -- real or apparent, for he sees that in Christ we shall finally be united. The opposites are to be reconciled, and contrasts are to be fused into an all-embracing union. Christ is the light of life. Flesh and spirit, grief and joy, life and death, are brought into unity at the cross.

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[1] II Corinthians, 6: 9-10; Romans, 7: 15; 7: 24; 7: 25.

In the process, however, the individual's humanity is not destroyed. Again we refer to Alexander:[1]

> The natural is transmuted into the spiritual, the earthly into the heavenly. The "old man" remains, but with a changed character, his former affections and lusts are crucified. The "old self" is preserved, but, purged of selfishness, which is the root of sin, and is transformed into a higher, larger selfhood. The old "body" abides, but it is consecrated to nobler uses, and its powers and passions become the instruments of holiness. The old pain persists, nay, often becomes intenser, but it is pain shot through with joy, and, sanctified and sweetened by fellowship with Christ. It is working for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Law remains but it is robbed of its legalism, and fulfilled in love, and lifted up into the realm of liberty. That mystic word of the Apostle's which was the secret of his own complex life, is the solution of all of life's mysteries. "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.

The purpose of the ages will be accomplished when "we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a full grown man unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Such, for Paul, was the summum bonum in life.[2]

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1 Alexander, op. cit., p. 362.

2 Ephesians, 4: 13.

CHAPTER V

COMPARISON AND EVALUATION

1. The Ethical Similarities of Jesus and Paul

There are three important points in which the ethical systems of Jesus and Paul are similar, and under which all the lesser similarities can be arranged. First, Paul makes agapé the solution of all social problems. The same force which also moved the Son to give himself, could also be trusted to move men to the necessary subordination and sacrifice of self-interests for the common good.

For Jesus and Paul the function of agapé in life was both central and all comprehensive. Personal, social, and divine relationships in every form were to be controlled by agapé. Paul declared that all the Law was fulfilled in this one word: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."[1] Again: "He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the Law."[2] And again: "Above all things put on love which giveth cohesion to the perfect life."[3] Jesus

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[1] Galatians, 5: 14.
[2] Romans, 13: 8.
[3] Colossians, 3: 14; I Thessalonians, 1: 3; II Cor. 8: 7.
[4] Matthew, 22: 37ff.

also said that the whole duty of man could be summed up in the following striking and simple words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, mind and strength and thy neighbor as thyself."[1] Thus the central and all important pillar of similarity was love in the heart of the individual for others and for God.

The second outstanding point of similarity between Jesus and Paul was their attitude to the Jewish Law. Paul had a gracious respect for the Jewish Law and declared that it was spiritual, which was almost equivalent to speaking of it as divine. He pointed out that the ancient rite of circumcision had value, and he continued, in some cases at least, to practice certain ceremonial observances. Some have charged him in this respect with inconsistency because he proclaimed that Christ was the end of the Law, and for stating that the Christian was dead to the Law, thus pointing out, that, in his belief at least, the Law was transitory.[2] This apparent contradiction in Paul's attitude to the Law rests on the fact that Paul viewed the Law in two aspects. First, he viewed the Law in content as making known the ethical requirements of God, and as such it was holy and just and good. Second,

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1 Matthew, 22: 37ff.

2 Colossians, 3: 14; I Thessalonians, 1: 3; II Corinthians, 8:7; Galatians, 3: 19.

he viewed the Law as a system which, if slavishly obeyed, would lead men to think that they could command the favor of God and thus earn their own righteousness. This, Paul held as impossible. Viewed in this second aspect the Law was in direct contradiction to the Gospel with which Paul declared he had been entrusted.

The same paradox is also observed in the attitude of Jesus to the Law. Luke records Jesus having said, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one jot or tittle of the Law to fail."[1] Then follows a statement of the converse: "The Law and the prophets were until John, since then the Kingdom of God is preached." The implication is that the preaching of the Kingdom of God supplanted the Law. Matthew also records Jesus as having said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."[2] Paul also repudiates the same suggestion thus: "Do we then make void the law through faith? May it not be: yea, we establish the law."[3] Again: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."[4]

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1 Colossians, 3: 14; I Thess., 1: 3; II Cor., 8: 7; Gal., 3: 19.

2 Matthew, 5: 17.

3 Romans, 3: 31.

4 Ibid., 13: 10.

"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."[1] "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ."[2] Thus Jesus[3] and Paul[4] both summed up the Law in its entireity as love to God and man.

In the third place both Jesus and Paul appeared to believe that time, in so far as the then present order was concerned, was short, Hence civil powers were to be tolerated and respected. Respecting the Roman government Jesus said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's."[5] And Paul, with the same government in mind wrote: "Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."[6] Such governments would pass away with the coming of the end so why worry unnecessarily about them? Jesus regarded the next order as the Kingdom of God, and Paul regarded it as the return of Christ.

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1 Galatians, 5: 14.
2 Ibid., 6: 2.
3 Matthew, 22: 37ff.
4 Romans, 13: 10.
5 Mark, 12: 14.
6 Romans, 13: 7.

2. The Ethical Differences of Jesus and Paul

There are many minor differences such as appears in the matter of allowing divorce, in which instances Paul appears to be much more liberal. Probably Paul's liberality was from necessity, as the areas in which he labored were more degraded than those in which Jesus toiled.[1] This in itself is a slight difference, but with regard to the systems of Jesus and Paul it is not. Hence all such monor differences shall forthwith be dispensed and the two major differences observed.

The first of these is in relation to sin and salvation. Jesus spoke of salvation, or forgiveness, in terms of remission of sin.[2] The person was regarded as having incurred guilt, had been convicted, and the conviction recorded against him. Forgiveness then stood for the cancellation of the conviction and the removal of the guilt. The forgiven person then appeared to return to the class of the innocent, but not to fully restored personal relations.

In Paul's system we find the need of the bestowal of forgiveness lying back of his doctrine of

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1 Romans, 1.

2 Mark, 11: 25f.

justification. He introduced a new term for forgiveness, χαρί δουαί. It is a term which ignores the forensic aspect which was emphasized by Jesus and emphasizes the fact that the personal relations which were destroyed by sin are then restored.

Paul thus appears to disclose a deeper conception of sin, declaring that sin not merely calls for acquittal but also for reconciliation. This again may be due to the fact that the peoples among whom he labored were more firmly in the grip of the sinister power of sin than were the more moral Jews among whom Jesus labored.

The second major difference is more important as it deals with the summum bonum itself in their ethical systems. Jesus, we have observed, regarded the summum bonum as membership in the Kingdom of God. He said, "The Kingdom of God is within you." This inner rule of God also guaranteed membership in the expected external Kingdom of God which was thought soon to appear.

Paul did not quite view the matter in the same light. For him the summum bonum was to be Christ-like in every respect. If one were Christ-like, everything else, with regard to the future, would naturally take care of itself. "Christ in you" was the hope of glory. All social and personal relationships were to be subjected to that one supreme good.

Jesus called on all men to follow him -- "Follow me", not necessarily literally but certainly spiritually. Paul himself was following Christ, and said to others: "Follow me as I follow Christ." In this respect Jesus and Paul were the same. Jesus, however, goes one step beyond Paul by implying that by following him they would naturally enter the Kingdom of God. Paul appeared to take it for granted that if one were like Christ the future state would naturally take care of itself.

3. Jesus, Paul, and Aristotle

Aristotle, to whom we have already referred,[1] regarded the summum bonum as happiness. "Happiness alone is desired for its own sake, and not for the sake of something else."[2]

Aristotle derives the measure by which the conditions of happiness are determined from the objective character of the activities of life. "For every living creature the good consists in the perfection of its activity; and therefore for men, according to Aristotle, it

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[1] See page one of this study.

[2] Zeller, E., Greek Philosophy, p. 209; Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Book 1, ch. 2.

consists in the perfection of the specially human activity. This is the activity of reason, and virtue is the activity of reason in harmony with its mission. Hence the happiness of men, as such, consists in virtue."[1]

Virtue is the product of an oft repeated moral action. It is a condition, or a moral dexterity of soul acquired through practice. Every action accomplishes something as it works. Every action is imperfect in so far as there is in it either too much or too little. Its perfection consists in maintaining a true mean between too much and too little. Virtue may therefore be defined as the observance of the right mean in action -- the mean relative to ourselves. What is enough for one individual may be insufficient for another. The virtue of a man, of a woman, of a child, and of a slave is respectively different. The determination of the correct mean will therefore always be doubtful. An exact rule is impossible. We can only say respecting it that it is a question of correct practical insight, i.e., that is the correct mean which is seen to be such by the man of intelligence.[2]

Aristotle's table of virtues does not comprise the Christian qualities of humility, charity, chastity,

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1 Zeller, op. cit., p. 209.

2 Schwegler, A., A Hist. of Philos., p. 154; Aristotle, op. cit., Book 2.

self-devotion, and the like. He separates ethics from religion, and thus leaves out all consideration of man's conduct in relation to God.[1] He reserves wisdom and justice to be made the subjects of separate discussions, holding that neither is a mean state of the passions. The list then, thus restricted, is Courage, Temperance, Liberality, Magnificence, High-mindedness, Gentleness, Truthfulness, Wittiness, Friendliness, Modesty, and Righteous Indignation.[2] Happiness is thus a "perfect practical activity in a perfect life."[3]

A perfect life calls for maturity. A child cannot therefore be happy because he is as yet incapable of complete activity. Poverty, sickness, and misfortune disturb happiness.[4] Therefore the sickness, or misfortune befalling one's children or even one's grandchildren would disturb one's happiness.

> But if happiness consists in activity in accordance with virtue [says Aristotle][5], it

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1 Grant, A., Aristotle, p. 95.

2 Aristotle, op. cit., Book 2, ch. 7.

3 Schwegler, op. cit., p. 153.

4 Zeller, op. cit., p. 20.

5 Aristotle, op. cit., Book 10, ch. 7: 1-2.

> is reasonable that it should be activity in accordance with the highest virtue; and this will be the virtue of the best part of us. Whether then this be the intellect or whatever else it be that is thought to rule and lead us by nature, and to have cognizance of what is noble and divine, either as being itself also actually divine, or as being relatively the divinest part of us, it is the activity of this part of us in accordance with the virtue proper to it that will constitute perfect happiness; and it has been already stated that this activity is the activity of contemplation.
>
> And that happiness consists in contemplation may be accepted as agreeing both with the results already reached and with the truth. For contemplation is at once the highest form of activity, since the intellect is the highest thing in us, and the objects with which the intellect deals are the highest things that can be known....

Aristotle further points out that perfect happiness is some form of contemplative activity, for the activity of God, who is transcendent in blessedness, is the activity of contemplation; "and therefore among human activities that which is most akin to the divine activity of contemplation will be the greatest source of happiness."[1] Happiness therefore calls for at least moderate wealth, leisure, a complete life so that there would be no anxiety regarding the future, health, and

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[1] Aristotle, op. cit., Book 10, ch. 8: 7.

the welfare of one's family and friends.[1] Happiness is thus next to an impossible human attainment.

Aristotle regarded the family as "naturally constituted of man, wife, child, and slave." To the mind of Aristltle, slavery was a necessary institution in order to provide citizens with the necessary amount of leisure which would enable them to live ideal lives in the pursuit of the true and the beautiful. Therefore he proceeded to argue that slavery was "natural" on the ground that some races of men were by nature born to serve, being deficient in the "large discourse" of reason which other men possessed, and which gave them a natural right to command. Thus the slave was excluded from attaining happiness.[2]

Aristotle further points out that neither virtue nor happiness is attainable by any human being apart from society.[3] Ethical culture and moral activity are conditioned through a regulated social life, within which the individual obtains an education, and the opportunity for the practice of virtue.

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1 Aristotle, op. cit., Book 10.

2 Grant, op. cit., p. 105.

3 Aristotle, op. cit., Book 10, ch. 10, 8-23; Pol., Book 1, ch. 2: 13-14.

The aim of the State is not limited to securing legality, repulsing foreign enemies, and sustaining life. Its mission is something far higher and more comprehensive, "being nothing less than the happiness of the citizen in a perfect common life."[1] "The State is thus in its nature prior to the individual and the family, as in truth the parts of a whole are invariably conditioned by the whole as their aim to which they are subservient."[2] "The State is thus superior to the individual, superior even to the family; individuals are only accidental parts of the political whole."[3]

It is not certain that Plato's suggestion for a community of wives and property was meant to be taken seriously. Aristotle takes it so and gives us the first arguments on record against communism. He defends the institution of property as "natural", and points out that it makes an unspeakable difference in the enjoyment of a thing to feel that it is your own. He appeared to think that if Plato's notions had been good they would have been

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1 Zeller, op. cit., p. 214.

2 Ibid.

3 Schwegler, op. cit., p. 155.

adopted long ago.[1] "Instead of looking forward to a future of discovery and progress, Aristotle rather looked back, thinking that all perfection had been attained in the past."[2]

Thus slavery was upheld, and slaves were excluded from ever attaining the Highest Good. So also were children, young, and middle aged people. It appears to me that a state of contemplative happiness could not be attained by the aged. As long as any remained alive, they could not be certain that evil of some kind would not come upon them.

Such an interpretation of the Highest Good and the impossibility of attaining it falls far short of Jesus' and Paul's Highest Good and possible attainment thereto by bond and free, young and old, educated and uneducated.

4. Conclusion

The ethical system of Jesus is concerned throughout with inner principles of human action and not with statutory law. It would appear to be at least possible that the requirements of justice, mercy, and faithfulness

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1 Grant, op. cit., p. 111.

2 Ibid.; Aristotle, Pol., Book 2, ch. 5: 16.

could have a wider meaning for any one age than for another; but they do not become different, else there would be no moral law.[1] Jesus constantly asserted those permanent and essential principles which are grounded in the very cosmos itself, and consequently are as permanent as is the cosmos. Hence the system of Jesus is permanently valid. Jesus can therefore rightly be called the Founder of Christianity.[2]

If we dogmatize interpretation, then of course Paul must be considered as a co-founder. But if we follow the example of Paul and interpret the principles of Jesus to meet the present needs, Jesus remains the founder of Christianity.[3] Tragedy would appear to be inevitable, were interpretations dogmatized and carried over and applied to another age wholly different from the one to which those interpretations were originally made. This should not be done, but the foundational and fundamental principles themselves must be applied, and re-applied to every succeeding age.

It is said by some that if the ethics of Jesus were separated from his religion, they would commend

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1 Hogg, A. G., Christ's Message of the Kingdom, p. 832.

2 Scott, E. F., The Ethical Teachings of Jesus, p. 120f; Hogg, op. cit., p. 120f.

3 Meyer, A., Jesus or Paul? pp. 119-120.

themselves to people of all religions, and also to those, if there are any such, with no religion. This, however, is impossible, for the teachings of Jesus are rooted in his concept of God and cannot be detached from it.[1] This adds to the permanent value of his ethics, for his concept of God is the highest possible: "God is a Spirit."[2]

We appear to be justified in concluding that the ethical principles of Jesus will have permanent value for the following concluding reasons: first, because of their inner fruitfulness. His principles have proved themselves for nearly two thousand years. During this time they have proved themselves capable of new application. The social order has been repeatedly transformed, but in each order men have gone back to the teachings of Jesus with profit.

Second, Jesus concerned himself with the underlying needs of life. Therefore his message has made the same appeal, in slightly varying degrees, in all ages and to all classes of men. Life itself was the center at which Jesus aimed. Hence before the ethical principles of Jesus can become obsolete man will have to become different in the very constitution of his being.

Third, the ethical system of Jesus can only lose

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1 Scott, op. cit., p. 121.

2 John, 4: 24.

its authority when love, truth, and goodness shall have ceased to be regarded as the highest ideals. Ever since the time of Jesus, the deepest urges in the heart of man have responded to his conception of what was the highest.[1]

The purpose of Jesus, in the fourth place, was to re-direct man's will to a new and higher moral order, and to generate in his soul a capacity for both knowing and doing the right, -- a will in harmony with the cosmic Will. Jesus himself appeared to desire and to work for a time to come when his rule would so possess the mind of the race that it would be naturally obeyed and consequently no longer needed. The Ideal would then be attained.

Christianity also owes a threefold debt to the Apostle Paul. In each case it has to do with human conduct. Life was also the touchstone to which Paul brought every principle to bear. He therefore, insisted on freedom from the law for the Jew, and he would not allow his gentile converts to be brought under it. Again, Paul stressed Jewish morality with its insistence on the purity of family life in protest abainst the laxity of morals in the pagan and heathen countries. Further, he stressed friendship, not merely with the Lord -- the Oriental cults did that -- but also with fellow believers.

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[1] Scott, op. cit., p. 128.

The Greek speculative system made little effort to organize its followers into local groups for protection and for encouragement in faith. In this field of organization Paul was a pioneer. Jesus made no effort to found a Church, but Paul did.

Jesus was a Jew, and lived among Jews and taught Jews by the then popular methods. Paul was also a thorough Jew, but was equally familiar with the gentile people, and was sympathetic with them. Perhaps no man has ever lived who was better acquainted with both Jews and gentiles. Hence no man was better able to interpret the principles of Jesus into gentile thought and apply them to gentile needs. Meyer[1] points out that were it not for Paul, Christianity might have been confined to Judaism, and after the fall of Jerusalem would have been excommunicated from Judaism as heretical and would have come to nothing in some corner of Palestine just as did Ebionitism, which was merely narrow Jewish Christianity crystallized into a sect.

It would therefore appear that had it not been for Paul or some one else like him at that particular time, there never would have been any Christianity.

Socrates and Plato appear to be indissolubly united. In fact, we have no way of knowing just where

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1 Meyer, Jesus or Paul, p. 106.

Socrates leaves off and where Plato steps in. It is similar with Jesus and Paul. They cannot be separated,--and Christianity survive. Paul must ever be the gateway through which we must pass to get to Jesus.

We conclude this study with the following excerpt from Dr. Meyers:[1]

> Therefore let our motto be: Back through Paul to Jesus and God! and our conclusion: Paul -- just one who points the way to Jesus and to God!

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[1] Meyers, op. cit., p. 134.

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